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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY OSLO
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 2674

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, SP
SUBJECT:CONFIDENTIAL VIEWS OF FRAGA'S ADVISER

REF: MADRID 2645

1. THE VISITING DIRECTOR FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND EMBOFFS MET WITH ANTONIO CORTINA, THE GENERAL MANAGER OF GODSA, THE POLITICAL STUDIES CORPORATION SET UP IN 1974 TO SUPPORT FRAGA. CORTINA'S VIEWS, WHICH FOLLW, WERE GIVEN IN THE EXPECTATION THAT THEY WOULD REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL AND SHOULD BE READ IN CONNECTION WITH FRAGA'S OWN PERSONAL VIEWS EXPRESSED TO THE AMBASSADOR IN REF.
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2. CORTINA FEARED THE GOVT, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF ARIAS' LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND THE GROWING PRESSURES FROM LEFT AND RIGHT, WAS LOSING GROUND AND THAT FRAGA'S POLITICAL POSITION WAS BEING HURT. FRAGA'S EMBRYO POLITICAL PARTY, "REFORMA DEMOCRATICA" (RD), HAS NOT BECOME TRULY ACTIVE AS YET BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR RESTRAINT WHILE FRAGA IS IN GOVT. IN CORTINA'S VIEW, FRAGA'S CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THIS CABINET WAS HURTING HIS LONGER RUN POLITICAL PROSPECTS THOUGH HE ACCEPTED THE NECESSITY OF FRAGA'S REMAINING IN THE CABINET FOR THE TIME BEING.

3. CORTINA GAVE US A BRIEFING ON THE RD, NOTING THE EXTENSIVE RESEARCH EFFORTS OF GODSA AND THE AFFILIATION OF SOME 5,000 ACTIVISTS.FUNDS, HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN CUT BACK REFLECTING THE HESITANCY OF BIG MONEY EVEN THOUGH SOME CAPITALISTS BUY INSURANCE THROUGH SUPPORTING LEFTIST GROUPS. RD'S APPROACH IS BASICALLY CENTRIST, LOOKING TOWARD A SUBSTITUTION OF A MODERN DEMOCRATIC CAPITALIST SYSTEM TO REPLACE THE MORE FEUDAL STRUCTURES CURRENTLY IN VOGUE.

4. IN COMMENTING ON THE GENERAL POLITICAL PICTURE, CORTINA THOUGHT AN EARLY REFERENDUM WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA, JUDGED ON THE BASIS OF THEIR RESEARCH THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD HAVE NO MORE THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE VOTE WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, THE CENTRIST GROUPS AROUND FRAGA, AND THE SOCIALISTS GETTING THE PREDOMINANT SHARES, LEAVING THE FAR RIGHT WITH A VOTE SOMETHING AKIN TO THE COMMUNISTS. HE NOTED THAT NUMBER OF YOUNGER MILITARY OFFICERS WORK WITH GODSA, ALMOST AS SECOND JOBS, AND SAID THAT WHILE THE INITIAL PROBLEM IN THE MILITARY STEMS FROM ITS ELDERLY CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP, A REAL EFFORT NEEDS TO BE MADE TO INCULCATE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN THE YOUNGER OFFICERS WHO OTHERWISE MAY EVENTUALLY BECOME RADICALIZED. (INTERESTINGLY, HE NOTED THAT SOME OF THE GODSA ASSOCIATED OFFICERS PLANNED TO MEET WITH MODERATE PORTUGUESE COUNTERPARTS IN BARCELONA BEFORE TOO LONG.) CORTINA THOUGH THE FORMATION OF THE COORDINACION DEMOCRATICA TO BE PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE AND CONFIRMED THAT FRAGA HAD BEEN EXPREMELY ANGRY AT THIS
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DEVEOPMENT, WHICH COULD LEAD TO POLARIZATION AND SQUEEZE THE CENTER. IN SUM,CORTINA'S VIES JIBE IN SOME RESPECTS WITH FRAGA'S OWN ANALYSIS IN REF, BUT IN OTHERS DO NOT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE QUESTION OF A REFERENDUM AND FRAGA'S POSITION IN THE CABINET.
STABLER

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